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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/059,987	01/29/2002	Steven Tinsley	TI-33936	6817

23494 7590 04/04/2003

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EXAMINER

TRAN, ANH Q

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2819

DATE MAILED: 04/04/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/059,987

Applicant(s)

TINSLEY ET AL.

Examiner

Anh Q. Tran

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 January 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 1-18 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-18 of copending Application No. 10/008,039. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because all the features of the claimed invention are the same.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Thompson et al (6,292,031).

4. Regarding claim 1, Thompson shows a driver circuit (Fig. 1) for driving a load (inherent element connect to the output terminals of OUT + and OUT -) with a differential signal, comprising:

A first output drive portion (16, 18, 46, & 48) operably coupled to a power supply rail (col. 2, lines 53-57); a second output drive portion (12, 14) coupled to the first output drive portion, a low voltage differential input signal (IN+ and IN-), and further comprising output terminals (OUT+ and OUT-) coupled to the load, and operably coupled with a constant current source (24), wherein the second output drive portion is operable to switch alternate polarity terminals of the load to the current source; and

A common mode compensation circuit (36, 40, 42, & 44) coupled to the output terminals of the second output drive portion and the first output drive portion, wherein the common mode compensation circuit is operable to detect a common mode voltage associated with the load and generate a compensation signal in response thereto, wherein the first output drive portion is operable to vary an impedance associated therewith in response to the compensation signal, thereby regulating a common mode voltage associated with the load, whereby the differential signal is transmitted to the load at a high rate of speed with a high compliance of the common mode output even at high current loading conditions, while maintaining a simple pre-driver circuit with a wide common mode range.

Regarding claim 3, Thompson shows the power supply rail is positive voltage.

Regarding claims 4-6, Thompson shows the two switching MOS transistors (col. 5, lines 52-55) and the current source (24) coupled to ground.

Regarding claim 7, Thompson shows the common mode compensation circuit comprises:

A common mode voltage monitor circuit operable to provide the common mode voltage associated with a node (34) of a voltage divider (30, 32) coupled across the output terminals for the load; and

A common mode error amplifier circuit (40) operable to receive a reference voltage input (REF) and the common mode voltage from the common mode voltage monitor circuit, and generate a compensation signal (through transistor 42) to the first output drive portion in response thereto, whereby the impedance of the first output drive portion is adjusted such that voltage regulation of the common mode dc voltage is provided.

Regarding claim 8, Thompson discloses the voltage divider comprises two series connected resistors of about the same value (col. 3, lines 6-7).

Regarding claim 11, Thompson discloses the driver are compatible with LVDS or CML (col. 3, lines 22-23, and col. 40-41) load.

The limitations of claims 12-17 are rejected as above claims.

The apparatus described above is applicable to the method claim 18.

5. Claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Tinsley et al (6,369,621).

The applied reference has a common assignee with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) might be overcome either by a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not the invention "by another," or by an appropriate showing under 37 CFR 1.131.

6. Regarding claim 1, Tinsley shows a driver circuit (30, Fig. 3) for driving a load (RL) with a differential signal, comprising:

A first output drive portion (Q3-Q4) operably coupled to a power supply rail (Vcc); a second output drive portion (Q1-Q2) coupled to the first output drive portion, a low voltage differential input signal (in1 and in2), and further comprising output terminals coupled to the load, and operably coupled with a constant current source (Iref), wherein the second output drive portion is operable to switch alternate polarity terminals of the load to the current source; and

A common mode compensation circuit (A2) coupled to the output terminals of the second output drive portion and the first output drive portion, wherein the common mode compensation circuit is operable to detect a common mode voltage associated with the load and generate a compensation signal in response thereto, wherein the first output drive portion is operable to vary an impedance associated therewith in response to the compensation signal, thereby regulating a common mode voltage associated with the load, whereby the differential signal is transmitted to the load at a high rate of speed

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with a high compliance of the common mode output even at high current loading conditions, while maintaining a simple pre-driver circuit with a wide common mode range.

Regarding claim 2, Tinsley shows the transistors are bipolar transistors.

Regarding claim 7, Tinsley shows the common mode compensation circuit comprises:

A common mode voltage monitor circuit operable to provide the common mode voltage associated with a node of a voltage divider (R1 & R2) coupled across the output terminals for the load; and

A common mode error amplifier circuit (A2) operable to receive a reference voltage input (Vref) and the common mode voltage from the common mode voltage monitor circuit, and generate a compensation signal (output from A2) to the first output drive portion in response thereto, whereby the impedance of the first output drive portion is adjusted such that voltage regulation of the common mode dc voltage is provided.

Regarding claim 8, Tinsley shows the resistors have the same value.

Regarding claim 9, A2 of figure 3 shows the limitations of the claim.

Regarding claim 10, Tinsley shows the reference voltage circuit generates a reference voltage of about 1.2 volts (col. 2, line 19).

The limitations of claim 12 are rejected above claims.

The apparatus described above is applicable to the limitations of the method claim 18.

Conclusion

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Furthermore, Applicant's arguments filed 1831/03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argue that "with respect to Tinsley, Applicants note that this rejection was made under 102(e). This section of the statute requires a disclosure of another". Tinsley et al is a disclosure of another because of different inventor (Fernando D. Carvajal).

Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Anh Tran
March 31, 2003

